

## St Breward Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in St Breward School PL30 4DF commenced at 2pm

- 1) Present: Christine Lusby, Veronica Stansfield, David Poxon, Ben Fairman, Stephen Nankivell, Phil Nance, Jo Best, Tim Brewer, Dorothy Grundon, Katie Goodman & school children from St Breward.

Unitary Authority: Dominic Fairman

- 2) Apologies: David Cornelius, Patrick Lucas, Darren Wills
- 3) Approval of Minutes Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2018 – Proposed by BF & seconded by DP – all in favour.
- 4) Matters arising from the 2018 minutes - none
- 5) What is a Parish Council? Summary of year was given by Denis Lusby, Chairman.

Chairman's Report Annual Parish Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019

I would like to thank Mrs. Ward and your school council for giving St Breward PC the opportunity of holding our Annual Parish Meeting here at school.

I will begin by trying to explain "What is a Parish Council?"

There are 3 layers of Government in the United Kingdom; England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland.

At the top is Parliament, which is in London, below Big Ben. Parliament is where politicians (MPs) meet to decide laws and make decisions for the United Kingdom. You may have seen MPs in Parliament, on the news. They often are quite noisy, and you hear the Speaker shouting "Order, Order," over and over again, until they finally shut up. I'll bet Mrs. Ward would make them behave quicker.

Parliament is not the same as the Government. One of the jobs Parliament does, is to check that the Government is running the country properly. This is why we are in such a mess over Brexit. The Government, led by Teresa May wants to honour the referendum result, to leave Europe, but Parliament won't let it.

The United Kingdom is split up into 650 different areas called constituencies. Each constituency has an MP who looks after the interests of the people who live there. People over the age of 18 then get to vote in an election for the person they like best or think will do the best job. The person who gets the most votes in each area becomes the MP for that constituency. Anyone can become an MP. Our MP for North Cornwall was a postman before being elected to Parliament

The main jobs of Parliament & the Government are

- to pass laws that are for the benefit of us all.
- provide health services – hospitals doctors, dentists etc.
- to look after our security here in the UK – Armed forces, police and border force
- to look after roads, trains, air travel.
- Help businesses to prosper and provide jobs, farmers to produce our food, clean water to drink; and cleaner seas to swim in.

To pay for all of this, they raise money through taxation. You might think that taxation doesn't affect you but every time you buy sweets or pop in the village shop costing £1; twenty pence of your pound goes to the government in VAT. Every time your parents get paid for their work; a certain amount of money gets taken off as tax.

The Queen is the official Head of State. Britain has a constitutional monarchy where the Queen only rules symbolically; in reality, power belongs to Parliament. So, although the Queen 'opens' Parliament each year and laws are passed in her name, the Queen herself plays no part in determining decisions made in Parliament. The Queen has the final say on whether a bill becomes law.

#### Interesting Facts:

The last Monarch to reject a law that was wanted by both Houses of Parliament was Queen Anne. She died in 1715.

No King or Queen has entered the House of Commons since 1642, when Charles I stormed in with his soldiers and tried to arrest five members of Parliament who were there. Later they chopped off his head!

The next time you see MPs in the House of Commons, look out for the two red lines on the carpet in front of each set of benches. The Government sit on the benches on the Speaker's right, whilst members of the Opposition party MPs occupy the benches on the Speaker's left.

The red lines were introduced a long time ago and were to stop MPs attacking each other with swords. The red lines are two-sword lengths apart; a Member is traditionally not allowed to cross the line during debates. Of course, MPs are not likely to attack each other these days, especially with swords, which I think is a shame.

Below Government are County Councils. Cornwall Council covers all of Cornwall and has 213 parishes and town councils. 123 Councillors are elected for Cornwall Council every 4 years

Cornwall Council is responsible for: education, highways, transport planning, passenger transport, social care, housing, libraries, leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection, waste disposal, planning applications, strategic planning and local taxation collection.

Mrs Ward runs St Breward School, but Cornwall Council's education department is her boss. The new houses at Chyrn Drive were provided by Cornwall Council.

The money Cornwall Council needs for all this work comes from Government grants, business rates and community charge. Every householder in Cornwall pays Community charge to Cornwall Council.

Finally, we get to St Breward Parish Council, which looks after the interests of all in our parish. We help Cornwall Council by advising on planning applications, Camel Trail issues, potholes, overgrown hedges etc.

St Breward PC manage all the public footpaths in St Breward for Cornwall Council, strimming most of them twice a year. We are responsible for Rylands play area and our war memorial at Churchtown, leasing the ground from the owner of the commons. We spent £60,000 installing new play equipment at Rylands.

We also own and look after the Public Toilets at Row.

Your PC worked hard to get the Village Hall car park tarmaced through the Chyrn Drive development.

We give money to village groups for local projects and money to the Church for the upkeep of the village graveyard. We have looked at ways of slowing down traffic through our village to make the roads safer for us all.

St Breward Parish Council can have a maximum of 10 councillors and a Parish Clerk, although we have only nine councillors currently. A councillor must live or work in the parish or live within three miles of the parish boundary. The councillors do not get paid, but our Clerk does, as she is our “Responsible Financial Officer” and is charged by the Government to look after our public money. We meet once a month and work closely with our Cornwall Councillor, Dominic Fairman, who also represents two other parishes.

Every year the PC sets a precept; an amount of money that each householder in St Breward must pay. This money is collected by Cornwall Council as part of their community charge. Our precept collects just over £15,000 per year and each year we must save some for things that will need repairing or replacing in the future. For example, we estimate that in 16 years or less we will need to replace the play equipment at Rylands – this would mean putting £3000 each year into a special play area reserve. We are unable to save that much.

I hope that this has given you children a greater knowledge for how your parish council sits as the bottom tier of Government in the UK and that when you all reach the grand old age of 18, when you will become eligible to stand as a parish councillor, some of you might go on to serve and help your community.

The school children asked the following questions:

- How do you become a Parish Councillor?
- Where does the Parish Council meet and how often?
- How long has there been a Parish Council?
- How can we get more involved in our community?
- How does the PC help the environment?

- 6) Repair of Footpath 13 School to Churchtown – Denis Lusby explained that the Parish Council has been successful in securing a grant for this work of over £40,000 and works will commence in July 2019. The footpath will be closed when the works take place.
- 7) Financial Summary for 2018/19 – audited but not yet approved by the Parish Council
- 8) Cornwall Councillor Dominic Fairman explained that he covers St Breward, Michaelstow, St Teath & Delabole. He invited the children to come and visit New County Hall, so he could show them where decisions are made by Cornwall Council. They collect taxes in Cornwall and have a budget of £500m to spend each year. The Council make big decisions together in this building. They also have smaller groups, called Committees.

Dominic is on the Environment Committee and explained 5 things you can do:

- 1) Recycling will take place every week, rubbish every 2 weeks in the future – do more recycling. Introduce a new food waste bin.
- 2) Pollinators – leave piles of logs, some areas which aren’t so tidy, compost heaps, not cut grass so often
- 3) Walking to school
- 4) Shopping bags – use your bags for life – remember to take it
- 5) Meat free day – eat less meat. Less meat healthy benefits lower blood pressure and reduced risk of diabetes, cancer, heart disease
- 9) e-safety. Helping children stay safe on-line – Mrs Ward will arrange for the children to have information at a future date.
- 10) Feedback from Parishioners

A lady asked in the Parish Notice boards could restrict notice sizes to A5, to fit all of them on the notice boards.

- 11) Close of meeting – Denis thanked all the Councillors for their help in the year, and thanked the school for hosting the meeting.